

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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Historical Background

Des Moines Memorial Way, a road located in the Highline area of south King County, Washington, was established following World War I as a living memorial to those who gave their lives in the course of the war. Within months of the end of the war, the Seattle Garden Club decided to transform a ten-mile section of the Highline Road, also known as the Des Moines Road, into an American Elm tree-lined road. The original plan envisioned the living memorial road to extend from Seattle to Tacoma.

The Garden Club's decision, to dedicate a road and convert it into a tree-lined avenue reminiscent of those of France, arose from the desire to create a "living road of remembrance" that would both honor and memorialize men and women from Washington State who gave their lives in the recent war. In addition, they wished to demonstrate community commitment to work for peace throughout the world.

Funded by donations from individuals and organizations, the "living road of remembrance" was completed by the spring of 1922. Between 1922 and 2004 the memorial road has been cared for by several organizations, with American Legion Post 134 in Burien serving as the principle steward for over 60 years. The road's name was changed to Des Moines Memorial Drive (DMMD) in 1984. Since the first year, the memorial Elms began dying for reasons such as poor soil preparation and inadequate watering. As the Highline area experienced increasingly intense development throughout the twentieth century the Elm-lined character of the road deteriorated as trees were aggressively pruned or destroyed according to the needs of road and utility work.

In 1962, a granite memorial was created midway on the corridor near the Sunnydale School. Many Highline residents did not find the stone memorial an acceptable substitute for the living trees, since the 1970s, there has been an on-going effort to rehabilitate and restore the road to its original status.

Project Goals and Objectives

In 2000, the Des Moines Memorial Drive Advisory Committee (Committee) was created via an Interlocal Agreement between King County and the cities of Burien, Normandy Park, SeaTac, and Des Moines. The Committee initiated the Corridor Management Plan (CMP) project in 2002. The purpose of the Plan is to provide a framework for memorial rehabilitation and corridor enhancement of DMMD. Recommendations for rehabilitation of DMMD focus on how to renew the road as a living memorial. However, because of right-of-way limitations, location of utilities, and other changes to the road and adjacent properties since 1921, it is not possible to restore the memorial to its original condition. The rehabilitated road will fulfill the original goals of the Seattle Garden Club in a modified form. The CMP proposes corridor enhancements that will consist of a variety of creative additions to the memorial road. The enhancements are designed to strengthen the corridor as a special place, set aside to commemorate and honor those who died in World War I. In addition to relating directly to the memorial, enhancements may also

expand upon other corridor "intrinsic qualities", or significant resources, such as recreational resources, historic and archaeological resources, and natural resources. Enhancements may take many forms including, but not limited to interpretive signage, artistic installations and traveler amenities, e.g. safe automobile pull-offs, pedestrian and bicycle paths, benches and landscape elements.

The CMP has three goals: 1) to establish guidelines for comprehensive rehabilitation, enhancement and promotion of the original living road of remembrance; 2) to comprehensively identify and document all intrinsic qualities located in the study area; and 3) to establish an implementation and long-term management plan. In addition to fulfilling the established project goals, this report is designed to meet the special requirements of national, state and local government Scenic Byway standards and to provide the basis for nominating DMMD to national, state, and local historic registers.

The Study Area

The project study area encompasses the original memorial as defined in 1921 with the northern terminus at South Park Bridge (Seattle City Boundary) and the southern terminus at South 227th St., in the city of Des Moines. The memorial road is approximately ten miles in length. The study area was expanded for the purposes of surveying and inventorying of intrinsic qualities to one-quarter mile on either side of the roadway. Local governance of the corridor is split among the cities of Burien, Des Moines, SeaTac, Seattle, Normandy Park, and King County. The community of Boulevard Park, in unincorporated King County, lies at the northern end of the corridor. See Figure ES-2 Project Corridor and Jurisdictions map.

Methodology

The recommendations contained in the CMP are based on findings from a comprehensive survey and inventory of the study area. The DMMD corridor was surveyed block-by-block assessing the

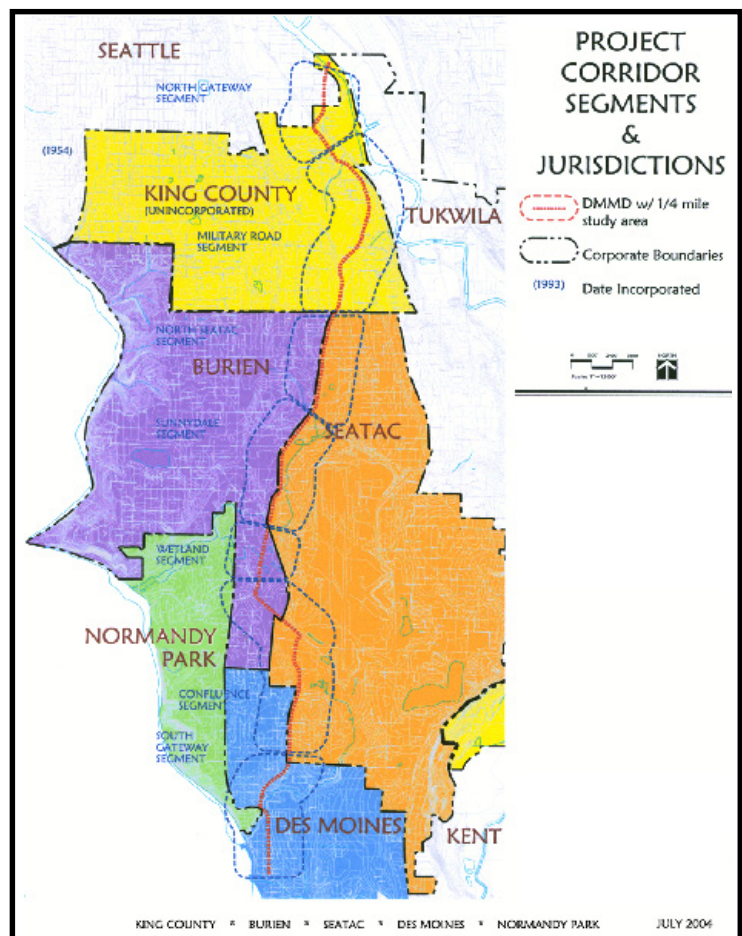


Figure ES-1. Project Corridor and Jurisdiction Map.

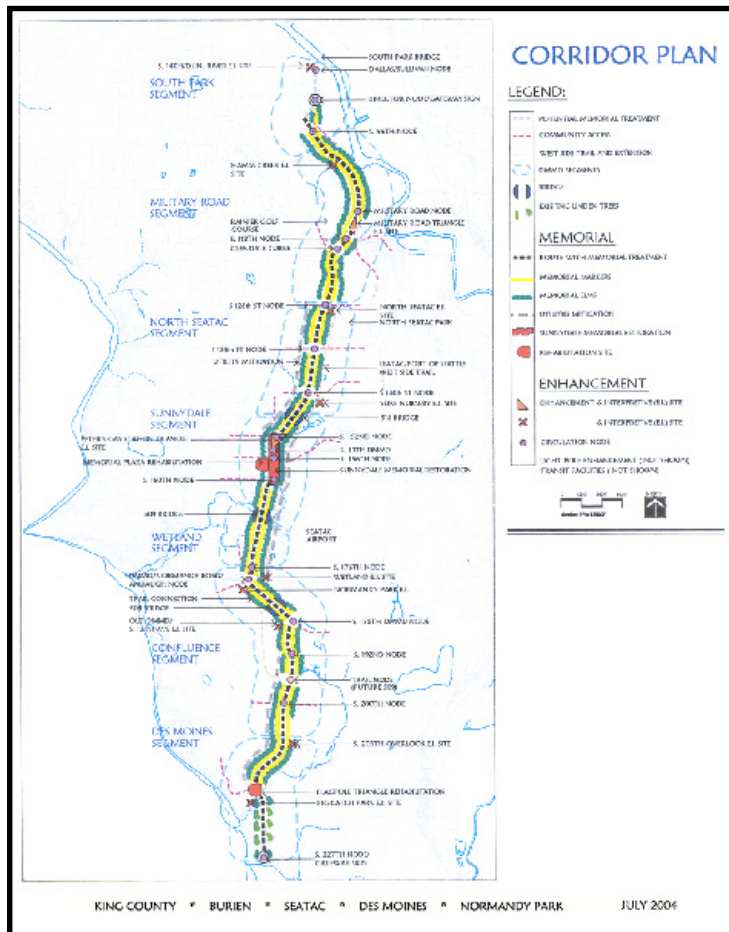


Figure ES-2. Corridor Plan.

length of roadway within each jurisdiction, variations in the width of the right-of-way (ROW), the disposition of overhead utility lines, intersecting streets and trails, existing sections of sidewalk and other infrastructure improvements. In addition, an equally comprehensive survey was conducted identifying the intrinsic qualities found in the corridor following the definitions and guidelines established by the National Scenic Byway program. The intrinsic qualities that were surveyed include historic, cultural, archaeological, natural, recreational and scenic resources. The term "heritage" refers to all of the foregoing intrinsic qualities while the term "historic" refers specifically to those intrinsic qualities that are significant for their association with people, events, or themes that have made an important contribution to local, state, or national history. In

addition to physical surveys, contemporary regional influences were examined including transportation systems and linkages, community growth patterns, and public development initiatives.

For purposes of analysis the study area was divided into seven distinct geographical segments: South Park (King County, City of Seattle), Military Road (King County) North SeaTac (SeaTac/Burien) Sunnydale (SeaTac/Burien) Wetlands (Burien), Confluence (Burien/SeaTac) and Des Moines (Normandy Park/Des Moines). See Figure ES-2 Corridor Plan. The segments were used for organizing the corridor survey and inventories as well as analyzing and applying rehabilitation recommendations. Implementation and management strategies, and accompanying cost estimates are also linked to corridor segments.

General Recommendations

1. Plan and restore DMMD as a single coherent entity, irrespective of jurisdictional boundaries, budgets, time frames and local municipal design standards.

2. Seek designation of DMMD as a landmark on local, state and national levels. Seek designation as a Heritage Tour Route under the WSDOT and the National Scenic Byways Program.
3. Prepare, by jurisdiction, land use and transportation planning that supports, through regulation and agreement, the goals, recommendations and guidelines of the DMMD CMP.
4. Implementation of the CMP should take priority over enhancements when prioritizing funding.
5. Develop a solid strategy for long-term care and maintenance of the DMMD memorial Elms and other road improvements.
6. Integrate art into memorial improvements and enhancements.

DMMD Rehabilitation Recommendations:

1. Select, locate and plant disease resistant American Elm (*Ulmus americana*) minimum of eight feet behind the face of the designated (permanent) DMMD curb-line, 80-feet on center on each side of the DMMD ROW, in close proximity and pattern to the original Elm tree locations. In instances where the present ROW is insufficient, easements and property should be purchased where feasible.
2. Where feasible, utility lines and other installations should be realigned or placed underground when they are in conflict with location of a replacement Elm tree.
3. Place a memorial marker at the ground plane in front of each Elm planted per direction 1 above. A memorial marker should also be placed in locations where overhead wires or other conflicts prohibit replanting of a memorial tree.
4. Seed wildflowers on the edge of the roadway using the same varieties used in the original memorial.
5. Redevelop the Sunnysdale Segment as the primary memorial rehabilitation section of DMMD, including redevelopment of the roadway surface to approximate the original red brick roadway and placement of memorial trees. Enlarge and redesign the 1962 Memorial Plaza to better accommodate visitors and celebrations;

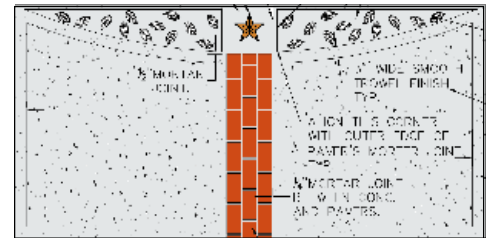


Figure ES-3. Memorial Marker



Figure ES-4. Wildflower Seed



Figure ES-5. Elm Canopy

6. Underground or realign utilities in an eight-block segment, from South 152nd Street to South 162nd Street in the interest of recreating the original appearance of the memorial road.
7. Redevelop the Flagpole Triangle, City of Des Moines.
8. Develop interpretation, orientation and education material for the memorial.

Corridor Enhancement Recommendations

1. Provide lighting banners/flag holders, and interpretive displays to enhance DMMD and the community corridor.
2. Develop a DMMD logo that expresses the original meaning and value of the “living road of remembrance” that can be conveniently expressed in a variety of media, (e.g. print, stone, metal), to support corridor identification.
3. Provide additional memorial gateways, gathering places and access sites along the corridor. The plan has identified numerous enhancement sites for potential acquisition and/or development within each segment of the corridor.
4. Highlight intersections, streets and transportation nodes.

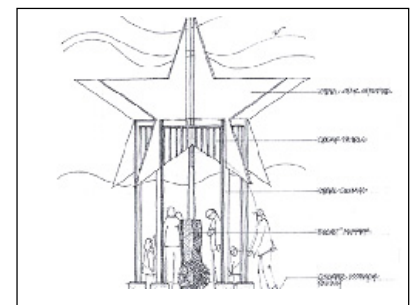
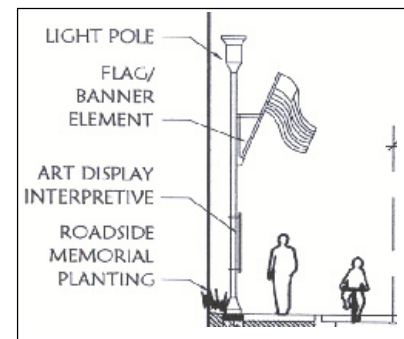


Figure ES-6. Enhancements

Schedule

The Committee has recognized 2021, the 100-year anniversary of the memorial drive as an appropriate target date for the completion of the rehabilitation of the memorial. Completion would include replanting of the memorial Elm trees and other landscape elements, placement of commemorative and interpretive markers, and re-development of the Memorial Plaza at Sunnydale School. As part of the CMP, educational and interpretive programs and publications will be developed. The first step in the rehabilitation process is underway with the development and approval of the CMP. Because of the number of jurisdictions with authority along DMMD it is of utmost importance that the Committee continues functioning in a dynamic leadership role making needed decisions, resolving conflicts and coordinating all rehabilitation and enhancement work. The Committee should work closely with the various jurisdictions assuring that the Plan's recommendations are incorporated into every jurisdiction public development projects affecting DMMD.

Costs

Costs have been divided into two categories: memorial rehabilitation and community-related corridor enhancements. Implementation of recommended memorial



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rehabilitation work is anticipated to cost approximately \$14.5 million, including \$4.5 million for utility undergrounding at specific sites along DMMD. Corridor enhancements are projected to be \$29.25 million. This includes \$15 million in pedestrian scale lighting. These estimates do not include the cost of road and utility infrastructure improvements.

Significance of DMMD in National Perspective

In addition to having great local and regional significance, DMMD is nationally significant. In the decade following the war, arboreal memorials literally sprang up all over America. Many more such memorials were planned than were actually realized. The DMMD (DMMD) memorial is distinguished among living memorials of its era on several accounts.

- It is one of the earliest planned "living roads of remembrance" and the first in the nation to be fully implemented. This was accomplished in three short years, 1920-22.
- It was the sole "living road of remembrance" following World War I to select American Elms for the memorial.
- Ten miles in length, DMMD was one of the longest living roads of remembrance, created in the 1920s.
- It is the only living memorial designed to commemorate an individual with each tree planted.
- It is unique in that both top French generals in World War I, Foch and Joffre traveled to King County to personally participate in dedication and tree-planting ceremonies. Other post World War I living memorials were not so honored.
- In addition to over 1,100 memorial American Elms, the original living memorial included floral plantings below the trees that commemorated the fallen including red poppies (reference to the French Flanders Fields military burial ground, and blue forget-me-nots).

Figure ES-7. Corridor Significance